

The Mind's Eye

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The next issue of the Mind's Eye will appear in May.
Contributions are welcome.

The Editor's File

BEASTS AND GERMS: THE ROOTS OF PREJUDICE

by W. Anthony Gengareilly

Testifying before the House Rules Committee in 1920, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer depicted alien Americans in bestial metaphors: "Out of their sly and crafty eyes . . . leap cupidity, insanity and crime; from their lopsided faces, sloping brows, and misshapen features may be recognized the unmistakable criminal type." Palmer was making a case for the government's unconstitutional suppression of the immigrant population. To reinforce his assertions, the Attorney General compared the foreign-born to lethal germs, their presence an infestation to be confined and eliminated lest it "fester and breed in the tissues of our organism against the day of hoped for opportunity to attack the body politic in a virulence redoubled a hundredfold."

Quite simply, Palmer was depersonalizing very real human beings--equating them with beasts and germs--so that he might justify their illegal and unjust suppression. In a classic study of demagoguery, Prophets of Deceit, Leo Lowenthal and Norman Guterman relate that such depersonalization is a necessary precondition for the demand that one group or another be forcibly repressed. Once people are metaphorically banished from the human community, violent actions against them are more easily advocated and undertaken. Stereotyped analogies enable us to slaughter enemies without guilt and to persecute social and political outcasts with impunity.

When human rights are an important feature of U.S. foreign policy and when anti-Semitism rears its ugly head on our own campus, we should be asking how we might, through education, break down the lethal stereotypes, the prejudicial associations which legitimize wars of genocide on the one hand and ethnic slurs on the other. An ethnic slur is, of course, not always readily convertible into an act of repression, but the seed is planted, later to

flower in the proper set of anxiety-provoking circumstances.

How then do we educate? Harold Taylor, former president of Sarah Lawrence College, has said that the free and self-reliant individual will be less apt to convert the strange and unaccepted into a depersonalized epithet, be less likely to view people in terms of prejudicial presuppositions. He will "respond to other people and other ideas different from his own, rather than reacting against them;" he will "accept differences as natural rather than as a threat to himself and his whole style of life." To be free and self-reliant, Taylor wrote, the individual "must know a great deal, must be sensitive to a wide variety of experiences, and must have enough confidence in his own judgment to assert it and to learn how to correct it through further experience."

In other words, Harold Taylor is saying that a liberal education is basic: it is essential for the development of an individual's freedom and self-confidence. Even at North Adams State College where career education remains an important priority, we cannot afford to overlook this admonition to educate broadly and widely. The student must be given time and opportunity to explore a variety of philosophies and lifestyles, must have the chance to encounter other viewpoints and to measure his own ideas against traditional formulas. An important goal should be the encouragement of a quality of openness in students so that they will be more freely receptive and thereby see others in less predetermined categories. An informed perception will then replace the provincial ignorance which views difference as strange and threatening. From this the student will derive enough confidence to overcome the warped stereotypes that too often lead to depersonalization, dehumanization, and ultimately to pogroms.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

by Robert Bence

Introduction

The following two-part essay is partially a result of my reactions to spending last summer in one of the world's poorest countries, the Sudan. While there I had the opportunity to interact with Sudanese of all classes, and to a limited extent I occasionally was able to catch glimpses of what it must be like to live in a traditional African culture. I became more aware of the complex web that contributes to poverty.

Sudanese elites whom I met expressed pleasure regarding President Carter's human rights statements but were confused as to their meaning and implications. I shared this confusion and have since been rethinking questions of what human rights should mean and how they can be promoted. The following essay is my attempt to clarify my thoughts in this area.

Part One

Although human rights is not a new topic, President Carter's presidential campaign and subsequent foreign policy statements and initiatives have made it relevant to the discussions of contemporary world politics. The words "human rights" are politically appealing and powerful symbolic rhetoric that can be used by both statesmen and politicians to promote and demote policies. Let us assume that our leaders, and most of us citizens, desire a world where human rights are paramount and that we want to do what is "right" for the peoples of the world. We can then proceed to address two central questions. What are human rights? How can they be promoted in the context of U.S. foreign policy toward the less developed nations?

The difficulties involved in defining human rights are illustrated by the development of the concept in United Nations' pronouncements. In 1948 the

United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A nonbinding document, it included the following political and civil rights: the right to life, liberty, and the security of the person; freedom from torture, arbitrary arrest and detention; freedom from slavery; the right to a fair trial and to equality before the law; the presumption of innocence until guilt is proven; the right not to be subjected to retroactive laws; freedom of movement within one's state and freedom to leave it and return to it; the right of asylum and of nationality; the right to found a family; the right of privacy and the right to own property; the right to freedom of religion, opinion, and expression; freedom of assembly; and the right to self-government through elections. Also included in the declaration were social, economic, and cultural rights such as: the right to social security and to work; the right to form and join trade unions; the right to an adequate standard of living, to education, to rest and leisure; and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

If this declaration sounds Western-oriented, it may be because Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the commission which produced the document and because it was accepted at a time when the United States dominated the UN. The process of defining human rights has usually been attended by conflicting interpretations filtered through varying ideological and ethnocentric perception screens. This ideological bias is further evidenced by the abstentions in the vote for adoption by the USSR and the Eastern European countries. In the West, human rights has an individualistic slant, civil rights and civil liberties being in large part a product of a rising middle class seeking "freedom" to pursue materialistic wealth. Liberal democracy and capitalism grew up together. Perception of what constitutes human rights varies according to political culture.

As the United Nations' membership list expanded to include the newly independent poor nations, other covenants were added to the declaration that prescinded from the ideals of the U.S. Bill of Rights in order to reflect the desire of the Third World leaders for self-determination and the right to deal with questions of national wealth and resources in a manner based on a principle of equitable distribution. Although the U.S. Senate failed to ratify the additional covenants due to an uncertainty about their implications, President Carter has signed them and is lobbying for their senatorial approval. The administration has also taken the position that basic so-called "rights of the person" are as important as civil and political rights or social, economic, and cultural rights. To a large extent, this concern reflects our deeply ingrained belief in the concept of individualism. These rights of the person are elaborated in the International Security Assistance and Arms Control Act of 1976 which states that the U.S. is to oppose "gross violations of internationally recognized human rights," including "torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges and trial, and other flagrant denials of the right to life, liberty, or the security of the person." For U.S. officials, however, flagrant denial of the right to life usually refers to arbitrary executions or genocide or other such "acts of commission." This does not include "sins of omission" such as inadequate food supplies or high infant mortality rates. By State Department standards, security of the person does not generally include freedom from starvation, and this is one of the key difficulties that confronts U.S. policy makers who attempt to apply human rights criteria to government policies in developing countries. Our view of human rights is understandably colored by our liberal democratic traditions and our position of relative affluence.

According to U.S. State Department calculations, more than 15 million children die each year from malnutrition, 700 million people suffer from

malnutrition, and 1.2 billion are without access to potable water. The survival problems of people in the poorest countries are unimaginable for most of us. Although one can propose well-developed philosophical arguments condemning the lack of freedom for well-fed slaves, it is difficult for me to deny that the right to sustenance is the primary human right to which all people should be entitled. Starvation should be an unacceptable condition for proponents of human rights. The sad conditions of extreme poverty which create misery in much of Africa and Asia need to be addressed if we are concerned about the fate of the world's peoples.

But how should we address this lack of basic human rights? The key concept in promoting all human rights--economic, political, and individual--is economic development. Affluence does not guarantee liberalism, as evidenced by the Soviet Union, but there is a strong correlation in most developed countries between wealth and political freedom. While we should certainly be concerned with political repression in places like Korea and Chile, as well as in many other authoritarian countries that receive U.S. foreign aid, the problems of overcoming subsistence-level living (in many cases, just reaching subsistence level) in the Fourth World nations should have a high priority.

In the next installment to this essay I will explore the options open to our government in promoting human rights and suggest some specific initiatives for implementing a human-rights-based foreign policy.

The Periodical Press

THE AUTUMN GAME

Part Two

"I am now a junior at Choctaw High School and I have played football for six years. I have suffered no serious

injuries on the field, but I've seen and given out a few. . . . If a coach tells me to center the ball and protect the quarterback, well, I'm going to block the guy in front of me any way I can. If that means I've got to crab-block him or throw a forearm to his windpipe, I'm going to do just that, because he's going to try to do the same. If I get the chance to tackle a fleet back, I'm going to put my face mask in his numbers so hard that I hope he never gets up. Some day I hope to teach the way I play. Stick it to him before he sticks you!"--David Deaton, Choctaw, Okla.

"I have been playing organized football since I was 8. I have watched as the spear, butt and spike have replaced the shoulder block and tackle. A week ago, while engaging in a drill during a practice session with the semipro Baltimore Warriors, I was the recipient of a "spear" to the head that was delivered with such force that my own helmet shattered into three pieces. Fortunately, I was not injured. Since then, I have read Underwood's article and seen a tape of the tragic, though legal, hit by Jack Tatum on Darryl Stingley. I retired from the Warriors yesterday. Come September, my 8-year-old son will be playing soccer."--George M. Church, Baltimore. (Ed. Note. Darryl Stingley, star end of the New England Patriots, was paralyzed, possibly for life, by a helmet-hit in a preseason game last summer.)

These are two readers' responses to John Underwood's three-part analysis of brutality in football, "An Unfolding Tragedy" (Sports Illustrated, August 14, 21, 28), an amply documented examination of the ills of what he calls America's prototypical sport.

The autumn game ended its 1978 season on January 21, 1979, in Superbowl XIII in drizzly Miami where the Pittsburgh Steelers became champions of the National Football League by beating the Dallas Cowboys, 35-31. The game was very physical (the current buzz-word for dirty)

and liberal "punishment" was meted out by both sides. Despite the close score, it was not a close game. The single "play" that enabled outclassed Dallas to stay within striking distance was an oddity that occurred in the second quarter. A slow whistle allowed linebacker Thomas Henderson to strip Bradshaw's arms from behind and let teammate Mike Hegman snatch the ball and run for a touchdown. This was not a play: it was brute force and humiliation and cowardice (You hold him and I'll rob him) the kind of thing which football, from sandlot to superbowl, has become.

The slow whistle is arguable. The plain fact is not. Henderson had stopped Bradshaw's forward progress and an honest bear hug would have meant that the play was over. The arm-stripping and ball larceny were touches of thuggery which demean sportsmanship, whatever that glorious term may signify in these latter days when football has become a junior version of World War II. Harland Svare on pro football: "This isn't the game I grew up with on the Giants. This is a cruel, win-at-any-price thing, without fellowship."

Underwood hangs his case on injuries--fatal injuries, crippling injuries, and injuries with long-term effects--and he divides the blame among equipment, principally the helmet; disregard for rules, inadequacy of rules, and nonenforcement of rules; and the use of drugs to enhance performance. Coaches and players excuse injuries because they are a "part of the game." They certainly are. Incredible as it sounds, the number of injured projected by surveys for the 1978 season were one million high school players, 70,000 college players, and 100% of the 1,300 players in the National Football league. In the actual event, approximately 200 NFL players were lost to injuries for the season--more than one in seven. In the California high schools injuries have quadrupled school liability insurance costs, bringing on a financial crisis that could bankrupt them.

A spear is a blow with the helmet. In one play in the superbowl, Steeler linebacker

Jack Lambert came through the Dallas line on a blitz. A Cowboy blocker moved over, head down, and spiked him in the midsection with his helmet. Lambert crumpled. That was a spear. Luckily, Lambert was not hurt and he stayed in the game. Not so lucky is Darrell Stingley in his hospital bed.

The helmet is three pounds-plus of polycarbonate, styrene, and leather honey-combed with pods of rubber, water, foam, or antifreeze. First introduced in 1939 as a safety device, it gradually became a weapon. The head is used as a battering ram in butt-blocking, butt-tackling, diving into pileups, and late-hitting a fallen running back. It is used especially against the quarterback and most especially in the vulnerable moment just after he has released the ball. Dan Pastorini, his ribs badly bruised, put on a flak jacket inflated with air for the Houston Oilers' playoff game with the New England Patriots. It worked so well he is going to wear it permanently.

The helmet is aimed at heads, spines, ribs, kidneys, and knees. At the University of North Carolina a five-year study of college players found that 29% of the most serious injuries resulted from hard-shell helmet blows causing brain and spinal cord damage, broken ribs, ruptured spleens, and bruised kidneys. Ironically, the helmet wielders become themselves victims: a study at the University of Iowa revealed that 32% of incoming freshman football players had hitherto undetected neck injuries.

The object of this and other forms of violence is to win the game by retiring your best opponents to the dressing room or the hospital. Are there rules to prevent this kind of behavior? Of course. And officials, club owners, and coaches assert that, by and large, the rules are faithfully observed. Art McNally, director of game officials, cites studies to prove that only 1% of injuries occur in illegal plays. The inference is that the great majority of players keep the rules. Whether they do and whether officials scrupulously call rules infractions are questions of fact. Granted they do, the

fact that 99% of injuries take place in legitimate circumstances is proof that the rules neither protect players from injury nor promote sportsmanship in football.

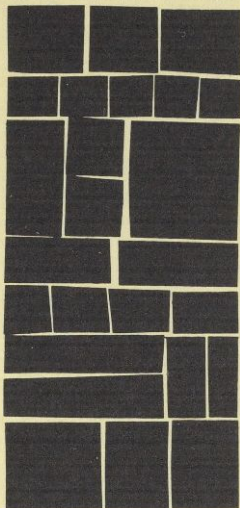
Who said, It is not whether you won or lost, but how you played the game that counts? Poor sentimentalist, his noble thought was made to seem foolish by the late Vincent Lombardi's code, "Winning is not everything, it is the only thing." To win, today's players (and coaches) use all sorts of physical and psychological skulduggery: chop-blocking and downfield blocking below the waist (both aimed at the fragile knees), gang-tackling (known as pursuit), unloading on pass receivers ("to make them think"), clubbing with taped forearms, stepping on hands, standing over an injured player and uttering profane language, pointing insults, taunts, intimidation, verbal abuse of officials.

The quarterback remains the fairest game. He suffers one-seventh of all significant injuries. In 1978 Tarkenton had his face ripped open requiring 64 stitches; he was back the next Sunday. Baltimore's Bert Jones went out for the season. Pastorini sustained three cracked ribs. Griese was hampered by injuries. Staubach was injured. Bradshaw was injured. Tommy Kramer went to the hospital. Cincinnati's Ken Anderson was forced out for a while by intentional injury. Grogan, the Patriot leader, started the Houston playoff game injured and left after the first half, when the game seemed out a reach. In real war we haven't yet got around to "taking out" the enemy generals. But in the ersatz combat of football it is de rigueur. "A rookie quarterback! It's like letting me into a candy store!" drooled a San Diego lineman to Dr. Arnold Mandell a few seasons back.

The player who said that, "one of the sweetest guys on the defensive teams," had just taken his accustomed game-dose of amphetamines. This from Mandell, a drug expert, former president of the Society for Biological Psychiatry, who freely joined the San Diego Chargers in 1973 to help with their drug problem, then wrote a book, The Nightmare Season, and got

BOSTON

by Whiteford Cole



NORTH END

See the olive oil from Calabria in red and gold tins,
 spiced sausages hanging intestinally,
 dried cod stacked like cordwood,
 bouquets of oregano, sage, and basil,
 kegs of black olives swimming in brine,
 squid, octopus, thighs of prosciutto
 at Grassano's Produce Store.
 Bands of men gesticulate on corners,
 while couples toy in the Cantina Italiana.
 And Joe Rezuto the bookie cruises by,
 turquoise Rolls, cigar-smiling,
 and a bleached secretary.
 Mafioso, they say,
 mainstay of the Cardinal's charities,
 he sends American dollars
 to people back home.

VECCHIA

Black-dressed crone perched on a doorstep
 while tourists stroll by to Paul Revere's house
 and hoods make book at the Cafe Paradiso,
 your leathered face frames eyes
 suspicious like a senile falcon's,
 and whiskered lips twitch without sound.
 Did that fly-buzzed head once, singing, bear
 baskets of fat grapes from Sicilian earth,
 while bare feet danced a younger body
 along sun-parched roads haunted by gods,
 and you wondered if tonight
 it would be Turi or Lorenzo after mass?



prosecuted for his trouble. A game-dose is as much as 150 milligrams--30 pills--in one gulp. Anyone familiar with the "high" induced by moderate doses of amphetamines known as diet pills, antidepressants, pep pills, or uppers will marvel or shudder at the imagined effect of such massive ingestion. The result, according to Dr. Mandell, is a prepsychotic paranoid rage state, a five-hour temper tantrum during which any manner of injury may justifiably be inflicted on the "bad guys" by the "good guys." Fear reigns on the gridiron on sunny Sunday afternoons.

Says Mandell, "A drug agony rages, silent as a plague, through the body of professional football." One Charger told him that the difference between a star and a superstar is the difference between a dose and a superdose. The degree of use is regulated by function. Quarterbacks take hardly any because they need the adaptive capacity which drugs inhibit. Running backs and wide receivers take only small doses. The heaviest users are defensive linemen, the appointed punishers of the opposing offense. As players grow older, they get hooked: they need the job and the big money, and they have to use drugs to perform. Said one, "I've got three kids, a home. . . ."

One would prefer to see them on the field in their right minds. Sam Huff, defensive back with the New York Giants in the 1950s and 1960s, whose name was synonymous with the roughest play in the league, admits he tried amphetamines twice--and got thrown out of both games for hitting late. "I thought I was playing great," he said. Huff in his right mind was a violent man. But he was real. He knew pain. The doped-up athlete does not, and this makes him dangerous. Mandell maintains that drugs are the principal cause of late and nasty hits, which are in turn a prime source of serious injuries. Drug use, mind you, has long since spread to college and high school teams.

Despite the evidence--and only a small portion of Underwood's documentation is detailed here--the NFL sticks to a policy of denial: there is no drug problem. Just so, it pooh-poohs the helmet problem

and rules problem. Underwood ends his treatment with nineteen proposals for changes in the rules and administration of football. But he is not hopeful for the game he loves. (One wonders if this is a game one should love.)

His third installment (on the drug scene, summarized above) was introduced by a quotation of John Cole, Pulitzer Prize-winning former editor of the Maine Times, commenting on the game in which Ken Anderson and his best receiver were "taken out" by intentional injuries: "Football's order has collapsed and chaos reigns. The only constant in today's game is brutality, and it is being fostered, not quelled. The game has reached the point where only violence holds, and only the most violent and most ruthless can survive. . . . With the best players gone, the game is no contest. I'm giving it up, after 40 years."

Me, too, regretfully--with my glorious memories of the Boston Redskins of Cliff Battles and Bronko Nagurski's Chicago Bears. Except I will tune in now and then, clinically, to see what new brutal wrinkles have developed in America's "prototypical" game.

--Charles McIsaac

Contributors

Robert Bence, Assistant Professor of History and Political Science, led a group of ten students to the Sudan in summer 1978 under the auspices of Crossroads/Africa.

Whiteford Cole, a freelance writer, resides in Brookline, Mass.

W. Anthony Gengarelly, Assistant Professor of History and Political Science, is writing a book on the abridgment of civil liberties during the Red Scare after World War I.

Charles McIsaac, Director of Library Services, is a long-time National Football League watcher.

Drawings are by Elise Cohen (NASC '79) and Beth Callagy (NASC '82).